

***A Method For Identifying And Using Compounds That Inactivate HIV-1  
And Other Retroviruses By Attacking Highly Conserved  
Zinc Fingers In The Viral Nucleocapsid Protein***

**ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE**

The present invention provides several classes of compounds which can be used to inactivate retroviruses, such as HIV-1, by attacking the CCHC zinc fingers of the viral nucleocapsid protein and ejecting the zinc therefrom. In addition, kits for identifying compounds that can react with CCHC zinc fingers of the nucleocapsid proteins of a large number of different retroviruses have also been developed. The kits of the present invention describe a set of specific tests and reagents that can be used to screen and identify compounds based on their ability to react with and disrupt retroviral zinc fingers in the viral NC proteins and, in turn, inactivate the retrovirus of interest.